

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 DEAE-00 CIAE-00 INR-10 IO-15 JUSE-00

NSAE-00 RSC-01 SNM-02 SY-10 TRSE-00 USIA-15 NSC-10

OMB-01 AID-20 SS-15 AGR-20 PRS-01 PA-03 DRC-01 /145 W

----- 114865

R 011905Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY LA PAZ

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1103

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, BL

SUBJECT: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT--AGENDA ITEM NARCOTICS

REF: LA PAZ 5843

1. HECTOR ORMACHEA, MEMBER OF OFFICIAL BOLIVIAN PARTY ACCOMPANYING PRESIDENT BANZER ON STATE VISIT TO US AND LATTER'S REPRESENTATIVE FOR LIAISON WITH EMBASSY IN MAKING PREPARATIONS FOR THE VISIT, MADE SPECIAL POINT OF CALLING ATTENTION TO NARCOTICS AGENDA ITEM MENTIONED REFTEL.

2. ORMACHEA SAID PRESIDENT BANZER IN CONVERSATION WITH PRESIDENT NIXON WILL STRESS GREAT INTEREST ON PART OF BOLIVIAN GOVERNMENT IN REPRESSING CULTIVATION OF COCA AS WELL AS PRODUCTION OF COCAINE AND ITS SHIPMENT ABROAD.

3. BOLIVIAN OFFICE OF DANGEROUS DRUGS (ONDP), A DEPENDENCY OF THE NATIONAL POLICE UNDER THE MINISTRY OF INTERIOR, HAS BEEN IN EXISTENCE FOR SLIGHTLY MORE THAN ONE YEAR AND IS UNDER THE COMMAND OF A POLICE MAJOR. IN TERMS OF MANPOWER, THE ONDP CONSISTS OF AN AUTHORIZED FORCE LEVEL OF 28 OFFICERS (ACTUAL CURRENT STRENGTH 17). PRESIDENT BANZER WILL EXPLAIN THE DESIRE OF THE GOB TO UPGRADE ONDP TO AN INDEPENDENT STATUS, PERHAPS IN THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT, THEREBY

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GIVING IT MUCH MORE AUTHORITY, PRESTIGE AND RESOURCES

TO CARRY OUT ITS MISSION.

4. A NEW DECREE-LAW IS IN THE MAKING WHICH WILL GIVE THE GOVERNMENT THE LEGAL AUTHORITY IT NEEDS TO CONTROL NARCOTICS TRAFFIC AND PROCESS VIOLATORS OF THE LAW. ORMACHEA SUGGESTS IT WILL ALSO AUTHORIZE RESTRICTION AND CONTROL OF THE CULTIVATION OF COCA LEAF. CROP SUBSTITUTION EFFORTS DEFINITELY CONTEMPLATED.

5. EMBASSY BELIEVES PRESIDENT BANZER IS SINCERE IN HIS DESIRE TO PUT TEETH INTO BOLIVIA'S ANTI-NARCOTICS PROGRAM, BUT IT IS EQUALLY CLEAR THAT GOB CANNOT REALLY DO SO WITHOUT ADDITIONAL EXTERNAL ASSISTANCE, PROBABLY FROM THE U.S. AS IT STANDS NOW, FULL COSTS OF TRAINING AND EQUIPPING ONDP FALL ON USG, WITH GOB ONLY PAYING SALARIES OF ONDP PERSONNEL. THIS EMBASSY'S NCAP BUDGET FOR FY 74 (NOT YET APPROVED) IS APPROXIMATELY \$125,000, NOT INCLUDING THE COST OF DEA PERSONNEL STATIONED IN BOLIVIA. THIS AMOUNT IS GEARED TO PROVIDING MINIMUM EQUIPMENT NEEDS TO ONDP FORCE LEVEL MENTIONED ABOVE AND EXPANDED TRAINING TO INCLUDE CUSTOMS AND MILITARY PERSONNEL IN NARCOTICS CONTROL AREAS.

6. AS IT IS UNLIKELY THAT GOB CAN INCREASE ITS BUDGET TO PROVIDE SIGNIFICANT FUNDING FOR AN EXPANDED, INDEPENDENT ONDP AGENCY, USG WILL HAVE TO DECIDE WHETHER IMPROVED PERFORMANCE IN CONTROL OF COCAINE IS WORTH SIGNIFICANT INCREASE IN \$125,000 FY 74 REQUEST FOR BOLIVIA NCAP. IN EMBASSY VIEW, INCREASING DEMAND FOR COCAINE IN THE UNITED STATES WILL MAKE BOLIVIA (THE WORLD'S LARGEST SOURCE OF COCA) AN INCREASINGLY ATTRACTIVE TARGET FOR TRAFFICKERS IN THIS COMMODITY. THEREFORE, SUCCESS IN ACHIEVING A SIGNIFICANT REDUCTION IN LOCAL PRODUCTION OF COCA WOULD BE CLEARLY IN USG INTEREST.

7. IF USG AGREES TO INCREASE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TO GOB, EMBASSY WOULD HOPE FOLLOWING CONDITIONS COULD BE PLACED ON THE ASSISTANCE: A) THAT THE GOB PAY A SIGNIFICANT BONUS (AT LEAST 50 PERCENT OF SALARY) TO ONDP OFFICERS, AND B) THAT IT PROVIDE VERY LOW INTEREST LOANS WITH A MINIMUM OF RED TAPE TO INDIVIDUAL FARMERS COOPERATING IN CROP SUB-

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STITUTION EFFORTS. WE MIGHT ALSO BE ABLE TO GET BOLIVIA'S ADHERENCE TO THE SINGLE CONVENTION ON NARCOTICS VIOLATIONS IN BOLIVIA-US EXTRADITION TREATY.
STEDMAN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DRUG CONTROL, ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, CHIEF OF STATE VISITS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 01 OCT 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: collinp0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973LAPAZ05955
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: LA PAZ
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19731060/aaaabrye.tel
Line Count: 111
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION ARA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: LA PAZ 5843
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: collinp0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JAN 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16-Jan-2002 by martinjw>; APPROVED <19 FEB 2002 by collinp0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PRESIDENTIAL VISIT--AGENDA ITEM NARCOTICS
TAGS: PFOR, BL
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005